

The Cheerful Letter

EVERY PLACE A CHURCH; EVERY DAY THE LORD'S DAY; ALL EVENTS BLESSINGS; ALL JOY
THANKSGIVING; AND ALL NATURE AND LIFE FULL OF GOD.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

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No. 10

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GIVE.

What's the true test of living?

A life that's spent in giving.

What's death without awaking?

A life that's spent in taking.

When the sunbeams cheer thy way,

Do they ask thee to repay?

When the bright flowers paint the sward,

Do they do it for reward?

When the bird sings clear and long,

Does he want thanks for his song?

Give talent, thought, and voice,

To bid God's world rejoice.

Give work and love and will,

Give golden time and skill.

Pour freely out thy whole,

Thyself, thy very soul,

To bless thy fellow-men;

Nor ask for aught again.

And, as thou giv'st, thy very store

Shall grow not less, but more.

— *Alice King.*

WE CAN BE ANGELS TO ONE ANOTHER.

We are to be angels to one another. This may be in many ways. For instance, how dependent upon one another we are as

to our thoughts! Only a few very strong souls here and there can hold their own and beat out their own thoughts, dependent only on themselves. The great majority can never be sure of a thought until they hear it confirmed. Many a poor soul has had a thought about duty or God or life here or hereafter, and, though it seemed like a bit of gold, never felt sure about it, never dared to tell it, never felt happy in trusting it, though it seemed so heavenly bright, till some poet sang it, till some strong teacher put it into ordered words, till some friends gave calm utterance to it; and then the angel came, and the food, as they came of old to Elijah in the desert, in the strength of which the soul could go forty days and forty nights. Therefore, tell the best thing you know, utter your most hopeful thought: perchance the very being whom you fear it will grieve or injure is waiting for it, is hungry for want of it. I believe that our reticence is often as unnecessary as it is wrong. We fear to offend or we think nothing can come of it; and all the while the one thing needed is that they who think should speak. We make things difficult by our hesitation. We keep the world back through our unbelief: we are not helpful because we are not outspoken. God be praised for those who, out of the fulness of the heart, let the mouth speak! They may be the spiritual sustainers of a multitude that no man can number, for he who feeds but one hungry soul may in time be the moral and spiritual helper of millions.

But, above all things, we can be angels to one another in showing sympathy. Sympathy is, in its inmost essence, the response of feeling to feeling, the answer of thought to thought; and, thus understood, its effects are akin to those we have just considered. Weakness of belief is born of loneliness, but is overcome by communion; and in like manner the spirit gathers strength from

sympathy. Sympathy cures. It can calm passion, soothe sorrow, and charm even bodily pain away. It is good for the headache and the heartache. It comforts the child, encourages the youth, heartens the toiler, and smooths the last stages of the aged. It is the angel who never dies, and whose words never cease.

Closely allied with this is the food given by kindly praise. There is not half enough of this in the world. Such a cheap food, and yet so miserably restrained! It is precious beyond all telling for the little people, who can be better taught by praise than by anything else. Blame and ill-tempered chiding only depress and confuse. Praise is itself an enticing object-lesson, luminously showing how the thing ought to be done. It puts the thing in the sunshine, and makes it gloriously plain. It is the best of all teachers; and, in the strength of it, many a one has gone, not forty days, but forty laborious years.

So, in later life, many a man who has been working on with only half a heart, since he knows not whether what he has done is well or ill, hardly daring (perhaps hardly caring) to take his own estimate of the thing, has suddenly had the glow of an almost heavenly radiance thrown over his cold, gray life by a truthful, kindly bit of praise. We sometimes wonder at the tremendous capacity, the fire, the speed, the sweep of thought and action of successful men; but they may owe as much to others as to themselves, to those who look on and bless them as to innate capacity. Other men there may be, with native power as great as theirs, who never find their congenial atmosphere, upon whom the sun shines not, nor any dew falls, who fill up the measure of their days, and, unnoticed, pass away.

And now there remains for us all one other journey; for the path of life stretches into the wonderful unknown. Thank God! that also is provided for. When the poor pilgrim, tired and lonely, goes to try that great experiment, then, if never before, will the angels come. Then to the fainting soul, as to Elijah in the desert, will come the heavenly food, "Arise and eat, for the journey is too great for thee." And so, with guides so wise and tender, be you sure we shall none of us miss the way.—*John Page Hopps.*

THE STILL HOUR.

"COMFORT ONE ANOTHER."

Comfort one another,
For the way is often dreary,
And the feet are often weary,
And the heart is very sad.
There is heavy burden-bearing,
When it seems that none are caring,
And we half forget that ever we were glad.

Comfort one another
With the hand-clasp tender,
With the sweetness love can render,
And the look of friendly eyes.
Do not wait with grace unspoken,
While life's daily bread is broken:
Gentle speech is oft like manna from the skies.

Sainthood attained through triumph over evil is more than angelic life that never experienced moral gain by battlings with sin.—*H. Clay Trumbull.*

The first requisite of a good corrector is that he be a good lover. If you want to find fault, first find hearts. Words do not reach your brother's will except along the telegraph wires of heart-strings. If he won't do it for your heart, he won't do it for your tongue.—*Amos R. Wells.*

Pre-eminently, the religion of Jesus is the religion of love,—love to God and love to man. In the teaching of Jesus the love of God and the love of man are inseparable. They are notes that blend in a single chord: they are colors that mingle in a single ray. They are the systole and diastole of one heart.—*Philip Moram.*

In the sight of God, greatness does not depend upon the extent of the sphere that is filled or the amount of effect that may be produced, but altogether on the power of virtue in the soul, in the energy with which God's will is performed, with which trials are borne and goodness loved and pursued.—*W. E. Channing.*

None know what it is to live till they redeem life from its seeming monotony by laying it a sacrifice on the altar of some great cause. There is more happiness in one such hour than in dwelling forever with the beautiful and grand which Angelo's chisel has redeemed from the "marble

chaos" or the pencil of Raphael has given to immortality.—*Wendell Phillips.*

Open your eyes to the meaning and breadth and beauty of God's kingdom, and the glorious vision will stimulate you to high thoughts and noble endeavors, and your hearts will be refreshed with surprising revelations of life's loveliness and worth. Give room for the love of God as motive and apprehend the kingdom of God as ideal, and no more can the daily task seem trivial, the daily opportunity small, and the daily sorrow vain. No more will your spirit be "cribbed and cabined" by hopeless care. No more will beauty vanish from the earth and glory fade from the sky. No more will you creep and crawl, the companion of grovelling thoughts. But a great sweetness and peace will come into your hearts; and a pure, unwasting enthusiasm will make service a joy and life a triumphal march.—*"The Enthusiasm of Jesus."*

THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB.

[Send all offers and requests for this department to Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 2 Kensington Park, Roxbury, Mass.]

OFFERS.

Will any mother who would like to have "Gentle Measures in Training the Young," by Jacob Abbott, or any one who would like "Black Beauty," address Miss Langmaid, 373 Boylston Street, Boston, Mass.?

"Pickwick Papers" is offered by Miss Florence Criste, S. Charles Street, Madisonville, Ohio.

Books offered by Marlboro Branch. Address Miss Della M. Frye, Pleasant Street, Marlboro, Mass.

Wood's "First Lessons in Botany" and "Object Lessons in Botany"; "Physiology," Brands; "How to keep Well," Blaisdell; "Singing-book"; Dictionary; "Plane Geometry," Wells; "Elements of Plane Geometry," Butler; "Civil Government," Townsend; "Readers" from grades 1 to 6; "English Grammars" of different grades and by different authors; "Arithmetics," elementary and complete; "Language Lessons in Arithmetic," by Barton; "Geographical Reader," Scribner.

The following books are offered by the Second Church Branch, Salem. Address Miss Decker, 4 Mount Vernon Street, Salem, Mass. First requests must be accompanied by reference.

"Tristram Lacy"; "The Girls of Quinnesmont"; "Tim Trumble's Little Mother"; "Child Pictures from Dickens"; Dickens's "Child's History of England"; "Young Men of the Bible"; "The Land and the Book"; "Greek and English Concordance of the New Testament"; Channing's "Works"; Richardson's "Method for the Piano-forte"; "The Athenæum," part songs for ladies voices; "Gospel Hymns"; "Le Français: Revue Universelle de Grammaire et de Littérature," 24 numbers.

The following books are offered by the King's Chapel Branch. Please address Miss K. A. Homans, 164 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

School Books.

"Grammar School Arithmetic," Walch; "High School Arithmetic," "New Plane Geometry," "Arithmetical Problems" (2 vols.), Wentworth and Hill; "Common School Arithmetic," Greenleaf; "First Lessons in Arithmetic," Colburn; "Academic Algebra," Wells; "Algebra," Sherwin; "Academic Algebra," Bradbury and Emory; "Arithmetic for Young Children," Horace Grant; "Introduction to Geometry"; "Arithmetic in Two Parts" (2 vols.), Adams; "Grammar of Arithmetic," Davies; "Elementary Treatise on Plane and Solid Geometry," Peirce; Goodwin's "Greek Reader"; "Xenophon's Memorabilia," Robbins; Liddell and Scott's "Greek-English Lexicon"; "Greek Moods and Tenses," Goodwin; first six Books of Homer's "Iliad," Boisé; "Herodotus Selections," Merry; "Anglice Reddenda," First Series, Jerram; Homer's "Iliad," Book I., White; a Lexicon of Xenophon's "Anabasis," Crosby; "Greek Reader," C. C. Felton; "Turning-points of General Church History"; "History of Greece," Oman; "Stories of American History," C. M. Yonge; Shaw's "New History of English and American Literature."

Literature.

"A Short History of England," Ransome; "Pilgrims and Puritans," Moore; Wane-strook's "French Grammar," Loucher; Otto's

"French Grammar"; "Elementary French Grammar," Kettell; "French Reader," Super; "First Year in French," Symes; "Contes Biographiques," Foa; "Deuxième Année d'Histoire de France," Lavissee; "Materials for French Composition"; "Entretiens sur la Grammaire," Sauveur; "Les Deux Brigands" (story for children), Saurian; "Une Vengeance de Jeannot Lapin," Masson; "Xavier de Maistre," Kastner; "Atlas Universel et Classique de Géographie"; Whitney's "German Grammar"; Otto's "German Grammar"; "German Prose Composition," Jagermann; Feller's "Dictionary of English and German"; Münchener *Fliegender Blätter*; "Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves" (in German); Gub's "Guide for Writing Latin"; Andrews's "Latin Reader"; "Latin Lessons," Leighton; "The Beginner's Latin Book," Collar and Daniell; "Cæsar," Allen and Greenough; "Select Letters of Cicero," Watson; "Ovid," "Cicero," Allen and Greenough; "Cicero," Thatcher; "Cicero," Chase and Stewart; Allen's "Latin Grammar"; "Cicero"; "Principia Latina," Part II, Dr. Smith; "Advanced Latin Exercises," Schnitz and Tumpt; "Elements of Intellectual Philosophy," Wayland; "Elements of Rhetoric," Whately; "The Philosophy of Rhetoric," Dr. Campbell; Flöckhard's "Principles of Chemistry"; "Comprehensive Physiology," Cutter; "Physical Geography for Grammar and High School"; "The Morse Speller"; "Our World: First Lessons in Geography"; "Italian Reader"; Todd's "Student's Manual"; "Vocal Culture," William Russell; "Hints for the Improvement of Early Education and Nursery Discipline."

Miscellaneous.

"Memories of Youth and Manhood," Willard; "Berea College"; "West Church and its Ministers"; "Boy's Own Book"; "Tales of Illustrious Children," Agnes Strickland; "The Robins," Trimmer; "Flowers for Children," Mrs. Child; "Napoleon Anecdotes," 4 vols.; "The Floweret"; "The Two Heaps"; Howitt's "Tales in Verse"; "Jonas a Judge," Abbott; "Lady of the Lake," Scott; "Library of Entertaining Knowledge," 5 vols.; Macaulay's "Essay on Milton."

The following books are offered by the Hawes Branch. Address Miss Della G. Putnam, 81 K Street, South Boston, Mass.

"Geography," Warren; "Spelling Book"; "Physical Geography," Somerville; "Arithmetic," Franklin, also an Eaton's; Franklin's "Fifth Reader"; Hillard's "Sixth," and Monroe's; "Geology," Loomis; "Child's Book of Nature"; Kerl's "Grammar"; "French Grammar"; "Reader"; Testament and "Le Grand-père"; "The Lamplighter"; "Garrison Gossip"; "Mignon," Winter; "The Wooing O't," Alexander; "Nellie Bly's Book"; "The Passion Play"; "With the Immortals," Crawford; "Sally Williams, the Mountain Girl," Edna Cheney; "An Old-fashioned Boy," Finley; "Old-fashioned Girl," Alcott; "Ships that pass in the Night"; "Scottish Chiefs," Porter; *Mayflower*, 1900 and 1901; a Bible and a New Testament.

Books offered by the Portsmouth Branch. Address Miss L. U. Sise, 3 Court Street, Portsmouth, New Hampshire.

The Waverley Novels by Sir Walter Scott, including: "Waverley"; "Guy Mannering"; "The Antiquary"; "Rob Roy"; "Old Mortality"; "A Legend of Montrose"; "The Black Dwarf"; "The Heart of Midlothian"; "The Bride of Lammermoor"; "Ivanhoe"; "The Monastery"; "The Abbot"; "Kenilworth"; "The Pirate"; "The Fortunes of Nigel"; "Peveril of the Peak"; "Quentin Durward"; "St. Ronan's Well"; "Redgauntlet"; "The Betrothed"; "The Talisman"; "Woodstock"; "Fair Maid of Perth"; "Anne of Geierstein"; "Count Robert of Paris"; "The Surgeon's Daughter"; "Principles of Biology," "Principles of Psychology," Spencer; "Progressive Spanish Reader," Morales; Ollendorf's "Method of Learning Spanish"; "College Series of French Plays," Böcher; "Modern French Reader," Rowan; "Ashes of Empire," R. W. Chambers; "Chap Book Stories"; "Robert Turney," William Sage; "Battlement and Tower," Owen Rhoscomyl; "Idylls of the Sea," Frank T. Bullen; "Sons of the Morning," Eden Philpotts; "The House of Egremont," Molly Elliot Seawell; "That Fortune," Charles Dudley Warner; "In the Palace of the King," F. Marion Crawford; "Richard Yea and Nay," Maurice Hewlett; "Robert Orange," John Oliver Hobbes; "Arden Massiter," William Barry; "The Reign of Law," James Lane Allen; "The Eagle's Heart," Hamlin Gar-

land; "The Gentleman Pensioner," Albert Lee; "The Helpers," Francis Lynde; "Square Pegs," Mrs. A. D. T. Whitney; "The Melvin Farm," Maria Louise Pool; "Children of the Parsonage," Caroline S. Allen; "Scrope," F. B. Perkins; "Red Rover," Cooper; "The Story of Ida," Francesca; "Ballads, and Other Poems," Tennyson; "Lorna Doone," Blackmore; "The Old Mam'selle's Secret," E. Marlitt; "Stories of Adventure," E. E. Hale; "Exercises in Composition," R. G. Parker; "First Lessons in Geometry," Thomas Hill; "Elements of French and English Conversation," Perrin; "Lettres d'Eugénie de Guérin"; "L'Homme qui rit," Victor Hugo; *Scribner's Magazine*, 1900.

The Brighton Branch offer the following:—

Magazines.

The Great Round World, 1899–1900; *New England Home Magazine*, 1900; *Youth's Companion*, 1884; *Munsey's*, 1898–1900–1901 (six numbers each); *New England Magazine*, 1901; *Scribner's*, 1901 (six months); *Ainslee*, 1900 (six months); *The Strand*, 1900 (six months); *Atlantic Monthly*, 1888–90 (six months); odd numbers of the *Outlook*, 1900–01.

Books.

Scenes from "Clerical Life," George Eliot; "Country Lanes and City Pavements." Address Miss Carrie L. Murdock, corner Washington and Allston Streets, Brighton, Mass.

Miss Cora H. Clarke, 19 Mt. Vernon Street, Boston, Mass., offers:—

"A Hardy Norseman"; "Middlemarch"; "A Second Life" (novel by Mrs. Alexander); "Concerning Isabel Carnaby"; "Beaten Paths," entertaining account of travels; "Sights and Insights," Mrs. Whitney.

REQUESTS.

[Read direction at beginning of Book Club before writing.]

Those who send offers and requests for the Book Club will do us a kindness by noting the following suggestions: 1. Please write very clearly. 2. Do not use a pencil. 3. Do not use contractions, especially names of States (as Cal. and Col. for California,

Colorado). 4. Write on one side only of the paper. 5. Do not forget to give your full address. (The State is now and then omitted.) 6. Do not send matter for the Book Club to Miss Clarke, but to Mrs. Nichols, the Book Club secretary.

Those who write to us for the first time must send the name and address of a minister as a reference. Without that the request will not be printed.

Mr. H. P. Terrell, Yonah, Banks County, Georgia, asks for Goldsmith's "History of Rome," "History of Ancient Greece.

I would like to receive the magazine *Good Housekeeping*, and back numbers and current issue of *Butterick's Magazine*; also, "Eben Holden." Miss Florence Criste, S. Charles Street, Madisonville, Ohio.

I received a surprise package at Christmas, but there was no name on it. I extend sincere thanks to the sender. My little niece, who lives with me, would like a dictionary, and I should be glad of any reading. Miss Lena Thomas, Charity, Patrick County, Virginia.

A dear friend has just sent me a copy of your bright and interesting little paper. We have moved to a new country. It is far from a railroad, and we have no church or Sunday-school, and until a few days ago had to go twelve miles to the post-office. We have little to read, and all I have I loan. I never saw people so hungry for something to read. I have three boys, a little girl of seven years, and a baby eight months old. I have no words to tell you how thankful I would be for reading, particularly for the following books: *Peter-son's* or *Godey's Magazine*, "David Harum," "The Redemption of David Corson," or "A Galloway Heard." Mrs. Harriet L. Huntley, Caleb, Wheeler County, Oregon.

Mrs. Nancy Ashworth, Osage, Patrick County, Virginia, asks for religious reading for herself and books for her fourteen-year-old grandson.

Mrs. Fannie Taylor, Bassil, Virginia, would like to receive "White Cat Tales," "Home for the Holidays," books of cats and dogs, "Little Anna's Trials," "Uncle Tom's Cabin," and a drawing book. She wishes the reading for her children.

Mrs. H. C. Clanton, Taylorsburg, Virginia, asks for reading. She will pass it on to others after she has read it.

Miss Clara Frisby, Tom Bean, Texas, asks for reading and music.

Youth's Companion is asked for by Mrs. J. Lampkin Witt, Box 245, Lynchburg, Virginia.

I am very fond of reading, but I am too poor to buy it. I spend many lonely hours while my husband is at work. He is a farmer. I will pass on all books and magazines you kind people send me. Mrs. Albert Owens, Dobyn, Patrick County, Virginia.

I have read one copy of *The Cheerful Letter*, and find it a cheerful one, indeed. I would be glad to receive it monthly or some other good reading. I am particularly fond of "Sabbath reading," as I do not live near a church and seldom get to church on Sunday. I like journals, magazines, and all good literature. Any reading that you may send me I will share with my friends, so, while you help me, you will be helping others. Mrs. Ella Wann, Pisgah, Jackson County, Alabama.

Miss Lillie Edwards, Roaring River, Wilkes County, North Carolina, asks for religious books or magazines. Miss Edwards is an invalid confined to her room much of the time.

Miss Nannie Gregory, Jute, Stokes County, North Carolina, asks for the following books to help her in her studies: Lar's "First Book of Physical Geography"; Bingham's "Latin Grammar" (revised by McCale); and Wells's "Essentials of Algebra."

I have been receiving *The Cheerful Letter* for some time, and am always delighted when it comes. I am very anxious for school-books or any books that are instructive. (I desire *Advanced* school-books). Mrs. Arthur Thompson, Granite Springs, Spottsylvania County, Virginia.

I have a little boy and girl, and would be glad to have some books for them and for myself. I should like a "First Reader" for each of them, as I cannot afford to buy any books. I have received one or two *Youth's Companions*, and find much good reading in

them. (Mrs.) Hattie Ross, Silver Lake, Johnson County, Tennessee.

I am very anxious to receive Fiske's "Civil Government," also some reading by Martha Finley and Grace Greenwood. I also wish to thank the friends who have so kindly sent me reading. Most gratefully yours, (Miss) Kate Richeson, Amherst County, Allwood, Virginia.

My dear "Cheerful Letter" Friends,—I wish to thank you all for your kindness to me and my children. I have written and thanked all of those whose addresses I had, and I wish to thank those who did not send their addresses. I have not received any literature lately, but the children have been getting papers and toys, and I wish to thank the kind friends for them; and I will be thankful for any literature or any future kindness shown to us. (Mrs.) Ellen Atchley, Ebb, Arkansas.

Mrs. T. A. Gregory, Swansonville, Virginia, would like to receive any good reading. She has six children between the ages of fourteen and two years.

A farmer's wife with four children, living in a lonely, remote place with no advantages, will be so thankful to the kind *Cheerful Letter* friends for books and reading of any kind suitable for herself and family. We rarely ever get to attend church; spend many lonely hours; most especially ask for "Dora Thorne," "Thorns and Orange Blossoms," "Marian Grey," and "Romola." Mrs. James R. Brown, Verano, Patrick County, Virginia.

Mr. J. W. Phonts, Olney, Alleghany County, North Carolina, asks for reading, especially any that will be helpful in training the minds of growing children. Each book he receives is read by many other persons.

Mrs. Jennie L. Pleasants, Experiment, Virginia, asks for "The Lamplighter," by Maria S. Cummins.

I wish I could tell you how much I have enjoyed the nice reading matter sent me. Words cannot express my thankfulness to you good people. If you do not think it asking too much, I will mention a few that would be appreciated greatly: "The Deemster," by Hall Caine; "Kenilworth," by

Scott; "Wee Wifie," by Rosa Carey; "Lena Rivers," Mary J. Holmes; "He," and "She"; "Scottish Chiefs," Jane Porter. Any of the above would be gladly received. Cordially yours, Mrs. Mary Brown, Dellaplane, N.C.

Mrs. Kate D. Stafford, Kaufman, Texas, would be very glad to receive *Scribner's Magazine* or *Century*; also, *Youth's Companion* and a musical magazine for her daughter.

Mrs. Mamie Martin, Beverly, North Carolina, asks for a "Primer," a "Third Reader," and writing book; also, "Tom Thumb's Trip around the World" or other reading for children between the ages of four and twelve years.

I would be so glad if some one would send me current numbers of the *Youth's Companion* and the *Ladies' Home Journal*. I do not know how we would get along (mentally) if it were not for the kindness of our *Cheerful Letter* friends. They often send us books, etc. But as I am not strong, and sometimes do not feel like undertaking the reading of a large book, I so often long for some late magazines to pick up. I will pass them on to others, as I always have done. Wishing you all success possible, yours sincerely, Mrs. Cora A. Hoskinson, Nottawa, St. Joe County, Michigan.

I should be so glad to get any good books. I live away off in the country where there is no church or school near, and I get so lonely. I should like anything that you have to amuse children (little girls) one and two and one-half years. Yours very respectfully, Mrs. Maud Walters, Fincastle, Henderson County, Texas.

Miss Rosa L. Shepherd, Renie, Virginia, would be glad to receive any good literature. She is a young girl.

I would be thankful to receive any reading matter for myself or little children. I am trying to teach the children at home. Mrs. N. E. Russell, Peachland, Anson County, North Carolina.

I am very grateful for the books and papers sent to me last year, and would be glad to receive more. I should like a history of "McKinley" or the *Ladies' Home Journal*. Mrs. W. C. Hooker, Elamsville, Virginia.

J. M. Vannoy, Vannoy, North Carolina, asks for some fiction, "Eight Cousins" or other good books.

Mrs. Jessie Yeates, Birdell, Arkansas, asks for reading for herself and five children. She is a widow living in the Arkansas Hills.

Mrs. Hattie Ross, Silver Lake, Johnson County, Tennessee, asks for first readers for her little boy and girl, also reading for herself.

Books or papers will be thankfully received by Mrs. Judd King, Centralia, Indian Territory.

Mrs. T. A. Gregory, Swansonville, Virginia, asks for reading for herself and her six children.

THE MOTHERS' COUNCIL.

[Contributions to this department may be sent to Mrs. J. S. Howe, 26 Chestnut Street, Brookline, Mass.]

THE MORAL SENSE.

There can be no invariable age set for a child to begin school. Many considerations individual to each child must be taken into account. But in general, and provided the home training is what it should be, the later he begins, the better. One of the most highly cultured men I know has spent but seven years of his life at school, and five of those were at a foreign university. He escaped the long, tedious drill that most of us are compelled to undergo through happily having a mother capable of conducting his early education. Not all mothers are able or have the time to devote themselves to this noble work; but that case is indeed deplorable when the child is given over to the care of others merely because the mother finds his training a burden.

In no case should a tot under seven be sent to a regular school. If there is no kindergarten convenient, let the baby run at large, supervised by his parents in his experimentations. In these days, when science primers abound and books upon natural history are made so entertaining, there is scarcely any excuse for a mother's not acquainting herself with the lore that above all others attracts and enchains children.

Natural history is the basis of rational education. But it should be rationally taught. Do not puzzle a small child with fine-spun distinctions, nor burden his memory with mere names. What he wants is to find out what things *are*, what they are made of, and their uses. If he is encouraged to investigate, and allowed to collect plants, minerals, and what he calls "pretty things," he will be placed at the beginning of his life in right relations with nature, will learn to regard study as a delightful process instead of a task, and will early begin to exercise his faculties for himself instead of clinging weakly and blindly upon the knowledge of others.

In one of Miss Alcott's sensible books—"The Rose in Bloom," I think—there is a delightful little episode in the baby foundling's life, when her guardian, a college youth of more than ordinary judgment, brings the child pocketfuls of pine-cones, fairy mosses, and shells, and bits of glittering quartz as playthings, that she may begin her acquaintance with life from the natural and not the artificial standpoint. Of course, the lisping tot will ask questions that will be harder to answer than the talk suggested by the ordinary playthings that imitate the every-day life. And the mother should be prepared to meet her little one on its own ground. Any intelligent woman can, with a little diligence, learn enough of natural history to constitute herself the companion and teacher of her young children. And, if the task is not congenial,—and, strangely enough, it is not always congenial,—she will have her reward in an increase of influence and authority. Children submit readily to those who are wise in the matters they care most about, and they willingly and lovingly defer to those who give them sympathy and comradeship in their work and play.

The two cardinal points in the education of Persian lads in the time of Cyrus were "to draw the bow and to speak the truth." The essentials of physical education have changed with the passage of centuries; but we have not improved, nor is it possible to improve, upon the moral code so long ago adopted and regarded as fundamental. Truthfulness is the root from which grow all beauties and graces of character. It is impossible to be truthful and be otherwise bad, for badness is accompanied by self-

delusion; and the person who is accustomed to face the truth is made aware every moment of his exact standing, and can no more shun self-knowledge than he can deceive others. Experienced educators say that they never despair of a naughty child unless he is a confirmed liar. The child who meets your eye boldly and directly, who "owns up" unflinchingly, is amenable to reason, and can be won by candor and justice. But I am not sure that truthfulness is a virtue natural to all temperaments. Certainly, it is necessary to cultivate it in the germ; and the first wavering impulses a child shows toward honest and candid conduct should be tenderly encouraged, and the roughness and brusqueness, which are apt to appear at the same time with definitive honesty, pruned and smoothed without injuring the perfect bloom beneath the burrs.

We should aid children to understand and appreciate truth. One way in which this can be done is by insisting upon accurate statements. The habit of repeating a message in the precise words in which it was given, of describing locations and circumstances with absolute fidelity, is of great value. In childhood each single impression is vivid enough, but relations are confused. We should help a child to bring order into all this confusion of sights and sounds, show him how events are connected with one another, and that the world does not move by him, as he supposes, like a wild merry-go-round, but proceeds according to fixed laws. If he realizes that things have a regular manner of moving, he will see that there is a regular way of describing them, and that careless, loose, exaggerated language is not capable of conveying the right impression.

But we are ourselves responsible for much of the exaggeration that children indulge in. They catch up our superlatives, and build their notions upon our ecstasies and prejudices. If grown people would cut out two-thirds of the adjectives from their ordinary conversation, children would think more clearly and talk more simply. And it would also be well if the little ones were not obliged to hear arguments and discussions. When the persons a child most respects contradict one another, it is apparent to him that somebody is wrong,—in other

words, "tells a story"; and he goes out feeling that it is not important how he states a thing, since there are several ways of stating all matters.

Ah! let us take great pains not to bewilder a little child's moral sense! We may excuse the transparent, innocent romancing which makes many mothers uneasy. This telling of fairy tales is a natural phase of life, and all imaginative children pass through it. The important point is to teach the child never to say a thing with the deliberate intention of deceiving; and, if this is to be accomplished, we must never deceive him in the smallest particular, never break a promise made to him, nor allow him to break one to us. But we must be merciful about exacting promises; for to an inexperienced little one everything is possible, and he is eager to engage himself for what he may not be able to perform.

Florence Hull Winterburn.

NATURAL HISTORY.

WHEN MARCH WINDS BLOW.

March, in our part of the world, offers few attractions for the home-coming birds. Spring-like days occasionally delude us with sweet promise of summer, but Old Boreas blowing fit to crack his cheeks is a true symbol of the season. Birds, however, are already astir. The bluebird, "New England's poet laureate, telling us spring has come," delivers his musical message on the first warm day.

The robin, too, "goes by the almanac. By the middle of March he hurries back,"

and his gladsome voice is welcome announcement of coming delights.

Not that bird voices have been altogether lacking through the season now passing. Even in the city streets we have had the far from welcome gossipy sparrows; while dwellers in the country about have been blessed with the cheerful notes of chickadee and goldfinch, the drumming of hardy woodpeckers, and the inspiring scream of the jolly blue jay.

When March throws open the doors, even though it is with a blast from the North Pole, our dear summer friends rush in, and song begins. Early in the month we may

hear the gushing lyric of the song-sparrow, the "wandering voice" of the bluebird, the tender warble of the tree-sparrow, and even the rare sweet song of his fox colored brother, lingering on his way to the north.

Now, too, we shall see grackles in flocks, breasting the gale and shouting with glee as if they enjoyed it, the loud, clear whistle of the epauletted redwing shall ring out from the swamps, and the pensive strain of the meadow lark fill the fields with music. In fact, the whole bird world is under way; and the thought comes to us with a thrill that far to the south, even in South America, our old friends and neighbors are stirring,—are pluming their wings for their joyous flight back to the land of their hopes.

It is great happiness to welcome the wanderers home, to be prepared with food for our too eager little brothers, when winter steals back with blizzards and snow-storms, and frost that tightly locks bird granaries.

Not only has house-hunting begun, but some of the brave little mothers are already settled to their summer's work. Owls may be found sitting sometimes on nests decorated with icicles. Some of the ground-nesting birds have made their snug cradles, and have been discovered, buried, with their eggs, under the snow, but still cheery and hopeful.

That eccentric bird, the crossbill, "with songs like legends strange to hear," who pays us fleeting visits from the land of snow and ice where his heart and his food are, sometimes sets up a home in our climate, beguiled, perhaps, by the snow and ice of the early spring months.

Even our matter-of-fact fellow-creature, the robin, sensible as we should expect her to show herself,—even she sometimes grows impatient to see her young family around her, and goes to housekeeping too soon. More than once has the little mother been found faithful, but frozen on her nest. We all know the tragedy of the bluebirds a few years ago, who were caught in a prolonged snow-storm, and perished by thousands.

But, generally, the feathered folk weather the storms, seek out some warm retreat among the close-growing evergreens, fluff out their feathers, and bear their reverses like philosophers.

Spring is the time to study the language

of the birds. For in that season of home-making and nursery duties all the varied emotions of their lives are called out. Unlike the rest of the year, they are bound to one place. They cannot flee from unpleasantnesses: they must stay and meet them. The importance of selecting safe places for nesting, the constant watch for enemies, the many dangers that threaten, make these anxious days, and bring out characteristics seen at no other time.

Then, when sitting is over, there is a nursery full of helpless nestlings to rear, to protect from accidents, to provide with food, to instruct in the path of life. All these make spring the most serious and eventful as well as the most interesting season in their lives.

At this time the conversational abilities of our little brothers are in full play, and they are far greater than is usually supposed. Besides the well-known songs and calls which every one may hear, there are many low notes with the mates and the young that bless the ear of the sympathetic bird-lover alone, and force him to the irresistible conclusion that they are exchanges of sentiment,—talk, in fact.

No one who has closely studied birds at this period in their lives doubts that they have some sort of language:—

“For what are the voices of birds
—Aye, and of beasts—but words, our words,
Only so much more sweet?”

Birds are seen to consult over their difficulties, sometimes to dispute, to quarrel, to settle upon a line of action, and to make little remarks. This may be observed with great clearness in captive birds. Where one bird of a species will pass his days in silence except when singing, two of them will keep up a constant chatter.

Conversation may be seen, too, in the sparrows of our streets, who are great talkers. If we could understand, we might get their opinions of us and of our doings, which they watch with so much apparent interest. It would be interesting, though perhaps not flattering, to know how human life appears from the bird's point of view.

No one will question the assertion that birds can scold. Orioles are the most proficient in this accomplishment of any birds I know, especially the orchard oriole, who

can hardly deliver his sweet song without the interpolation of scolding notes. The world seems to be all wrong with this fellow-mortal. Even his wooing is a rather savage affair, and conducted with many hard words. His little mate has plainly learned to manage her domineering partner; for, in the several I have known, she never talks back, but goes quietly on, and has her own way in spite of his blustering. One of these birds whom I had several years ago, in semi-freedom in my house, actually bullied and teased his modest little spouse—a beautiful bird and a sweet singer—till she was starved and worried to death, to my great grief; for I had not suspected this result.

The house wren, too, is a bumptious individual, always ready with an opinion, and speaking his mind on every occasion.

The “fire-winged blackbird” is another who takes the burden of the whole world on his shoulders, while his mate is sitting, and protests vigorously at the intrusion of any one upon the territory he claims as his own. Not only does he make it uncomfortable for the feathered world, but he has no faith in the honest intentions of the human race. Sound reason he has, too, for that opinion; for he is one of the persecuted.

It is doubtless because of this bird's arduous labors in protecting his family that, as soon as the young can look out for themselves, he returns to bachelor ways. In a gay flock all the fathers of a neighborhood depart, leaving their mates and young to take care of themselves. This is a rare thing among birds, who are usually model parents. Most of them not only feed and train their little families in the way they should go, teach them their manners and their songs, but they submit to imposition of the true American style at their hands.

Nothing impresses the intelligent student of bird manners and customs more strongly than the “human nature” (so called) that they display. Their loves and hates, their anxieties and fears, their joys and sorrows, are plain to be seen; and their peculiarities of character are strongly marked. And there is as great diversity among them as among one's human acquaintances. They show individuality in disposition and man-

ners; and they do not exactly resemble one another, even in looks. A close observer comes to know individuals, not merely species. Keepers of birds in captivity have long recognized these facts.

This is what gives the study of bird life its great and lasting charm. Each new bird is a fresh subject, and nesting-time offers the golden opportunity to make his acquaintance.

Olive Thorne Miller.

AMUSEMENT COLUMN.

[Contributions to this column may be sent to Miss K. C. Porter, 22 Brimmer Street, Boston, Mass.]

I.

Geographical Charade.

(*Towns in Massachusetts.*) First, a kind of nail; second, the crossing of a river.

First, a reproach; second, a word of encouragement.

First, an artist's name; second, to inter.

First, a boy's plaything; second, what we cannot live without.

First, what cows do; second, a measure.

First, a marsh; second, a noted American general.

II.

I am round, square, a hard case, almost always tight.

Take away my first, you do not change me.

Take away my first and transpose my other letters, and I weigh more than ten men.

III.

Adjective Riddles.

(*Positive, Comparative, and Superlative Degrees.*)

I roll in the waters, I rush with the years;
I have part in your sorrows, your cares, and
your fears;

I sweep through the whirlwind, in thunder
resound;

I linger in air, I am fixed in the ground.
The end of all laughter, the centre of mirth,
I hold my firm place in the midst of the
earth.

I mingle with mourning, I echo in praise,
The whisper of terror my presence betrays;
I mutter where hatred and wrath are con-
cerned,

And the loss of me changes a friend to a
fiend.

Answers to Puzzles in February Number.

I. M-o-u-s-e (mouse).

II. Blowing.

III. Alphabetical Puzzle. C-lad, d-ark,
b-right, c-art, h-ash.

IV. It (eye-tea).

V. Thou-sand.

Conundrums.

Because B follows it.

When it's up at eighty (a-potaty).

A cow-slip through a fence, and a cow-
hide in a pocket.

The letter M.

There are few temptations more common to ardent spirits than that which leads them to repine at the lot in which they are cast, believing that in some other situation they could serve God better. If each such man had the spirit of self-surrender, the spirit of the cross, it would not matter to him whether he were doing the work of the mainspring or one of the inferior parts. It is his duty to try and be himself, simply to try to do his own duty.—*F. W. Robertson.*

CHANGES OF ADDRESS.

Mrs. Sue Scales is now at Sandy Ridge, North Carolina.

Mrs. Evalie Meek has moved from Milford, Texas, to New Harp, Texas.

Mrs. Hattie Ross has moved from Glade Springs to Silver Lake, Johnson County, Tennessee.

The following magazines are offered by the Brookline Branch. Apply to Miss Louise Howe, 53 Linden Street, Brookline, Mass.

Massachusetts Ploughman, from Jan. 1, 1895, to Jan. 1, 1902, nearly complete; *Country Gentleman*, from Jan. 1, 1898, to Jan. 1, 1902; *Rural New Yorker*, 1898-99 and 1900; *Breeder's Gazette*, 1898, 1899, and 1900; *Hoard's Dairyman*, 1898 and 1899; *Farm Journal*, 1901, complete; *Reliable Poultry Journal*, 1897, 1898, 1899, 1900, *Poultry Monthly*; *Dumb Animals*, 1895, and several other numbers; *Scientific American*, complete for 1892; back numbers of the *Art Amateur*.

THE CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE.

OBJECTS.

1. To cheer and comfort the lonely and discouraged—not only invalids, but all who need cheer and comfort—by the interchange of letters and by gifts of books and periodicals.

2. To supply in some measure to young people in remote places the lack of schools, by gifts of school-books, letters, and, for those who desire it, correspondence classes on history, the natural sciences, and other interesting branches of study. If any desire to join such classes, they may send their names to our secretary.

3. Also to supply, to some extent, the lack of a church. One good sermon or sermon extract is printed in each number of the paper. These sermons are never doctrinal, but practical, and intended to cheer and comfort the sorrowful and aid in giving a vital religion without regard to age or creed.

4. An important part of our mission is to mothers of young families, who feel the importance of their sacred charge and are anxious to learn all that can be known to make of their children good, upright, useful men and women,—good citizens of the country,—for which we must all work together if we would make it fulfil its mission among the nations of the world and to the races of mankind. We give books on subjects connected with the training of children, and our columns are open (in our "Mothers' Council") to all who have questions to ask or interesting suggestions to make on topics important to mothers.

TRAVELLING LIBRARIES.

The Travelling Libraries have now become an important part of Cheerful Letter work. In order that this department may be thoroughly organized and systematized, Miss Louise Brown, 79 Mt. Vernon Street, Boston, Mass., has kindly consented to take it in charge. Will those interested in these libraries, and desiring information, kindly address Miss Brown as above?

Kindly send subscriptions to the Treasurer, not to the Editor.

IMPORTANT NOTICES.

The address of our treasurer for the winter months is Miss Louise Howe, 53 Linden Street, Brookline, Mass.

Please send requests for reading matter to the Book Club Secretary, not to the Editor.

Those who send contributions of any sort to the Cheerful Letter must have them sent in by or before the fifth of the month if they are to be inserted in the next issue.

It is contrary to the rules of the Cheerful Letter Exchange to allow any one to make use of our paper by addressing letters, asking for money, clothing, or other articles, to those whose names are printed in the paper. This prohibition includes requests to borrow money and the offering of articles for sale. The name of any person who infringes this rule will be dropped from our list; and any one who receives a request of this description is desired by our Executive Committee to return no answer, but to enclose the letter at once to our secretary, Miss Langmaid.

ANY BRANCH OR MEMBER OF THE CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE, WHICH HAS DURING THE WINTER RECEIVED REQUESTS FOR MONEY IS REQUESTED TO REPORT THIS TO OUR SECRETARY, MISS LANGMAID.

DIRECTIONS.

EDITOR,—Miss L. Freeman Clarke, 91 Mt. Vernon Street, Boston, Mass.

SECRETARY OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE,—Miss Bertha Langmaid, 373 Boylston Street, Boston, Mass.

SECRETARY OF BOOK CLUB OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE,—Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 2 Kensington Park, Roxbury, Mass.

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